

Frequently Asked Questions

Healthy Virginians Initiative

Q. Will the program have the necessary management support?

A. The Governor is very much in support of this program. Approval was received very quickly. The Cabinet Secretaries will encourage agency and department heads to participate. Information has gone out in the *Leadership Communique* newsletter and a number of other venues. Let us know at the Department of Human Resource Management if you feel you are not receiving appropriate management support.

Q. Is the *Healthy Virginians* program for all state employees, including wage employees?

A. All state employees may participate in the *Healthy Virginians* initiative, but eligibility criteria differ for some parts of the program. The *Virginia on the Move*TM component, that promotes lifelong physical activity and healthy eating, may be offered to all employees, including salaried employees, those who have waived coverage in the state health benefits program and wage employees. There are other parts of the state employee initiative, the *Minutes Matter* program on cardiovascular health and CommonHealth education programs and challenges, that are open only to members of the COVA Care and Kaiser Permanente HMO health plans and those who have waived coverage.

Q. Does the *Virginia on the Move*TM program have to begin in November for employees to be eligible for prizes, or can it begin in January?

A. The online health pre-assessment will be available from November to mid-January, and may not be accessed after that time period. *Virginia on the Move* programs at individual agencies around Virginia may start at different times, and some agencies may have other programs going on.

Q. What incentives will be provided to employees for participating in the program?

A. There will be no financial incentive for participation. However, there will be various prize drawings during the course of the campaign and those who complete both the pre- and post-online health assessment will be eligible for a grand prize drawing at the end of the campaign.

Q. Are there tips or creative ideas available from other agencies that we might benefit from?

A. We are collecting helpful hints or ideas, so please send any you have to healthy.virginians@dhrm.virginia.gov. One example involves setting up team to challenge each other when implementing the *Virginia on the Move*TM program. At the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, approximately 200 employees, or 25 percent, signed up in the headquarters building. One hundred forty employees created 35 teams and about 70 joined as individuals. Signposts and recognition were given along the way. This included posting “road signs” indicating the number of

steps to different floors and departments, and also team photos of achievements during the program.

Q. Will spouses, or family members over 18 who live in the home be included?

A. The state employee component of *Healthy Virginians* is for a program for state employees only. However, we hope that spouses and children will be encouraged to engage in healthy behaviors, such as eating healthy meals and getting more exercise. Any member of the public can go on the *Virginia on the Move*™ Web site at www.americaonthemove.org and take part in public activities.

Q. Is the Governor allowing agencies to give a daily 15-minute walk break to employees?

A. The Governor is encouraging agencies to allow a daily 15-minute walk break at the discretion of individual agencies. We have checked state policies and procedures, and there is nothing to prevent such a break from occurring, similar to a smoking break. The challenge will be agencies with shifts or that operate for 24 hours, seven days a week. If you have any issues with the walk break, please contact the Department of Human Resource Management for assistance.

Q. Has any thought been given to providing those who participate in CommonHealth a discount on their state contribution to health insurance?

A. This has already been suggested and we are currently researching the feasibility of providing a discount on health insurance.

Q. What types of information will employees provide to do the online health assessment?

A. To do the online health assessment, employees will be asked for the last four digits of their social security number and their date of birth. Once logged in, they will be asked to provide a password. The assessment is strictly confidential and complies with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) privacy rules.

Q. Will money for prize drawings come from the agencies or the overall program?

A. Prize drawings will be provided through the program, not by individual agencies.

Q. Will there be a paper health assessment form for those employees without Internet access?

A. No. When the assessment is done online, the system looks at the answers and comes back with a health assessment report, similar to CommonHealth bi-annual medical screenings. That is not possible using paper, which is also much more costly. Please encourage employees to find a way to do the online assessment, whether in an HR office, home or public library. If there are problems with computer access, let the Department of Human Resource Management know and we will try to make arrangements.

- Q. Will state employees who are on their spouse's health insurance plan be in the database for the online health assessment?**
- A. Yes, their information will be in the database for the online health assessment.
- Q. As a coordinator, will I be able to determine how many of my agency's employees have taken the online assessment so that I can encourage others to do so?**
- A. To receive a step counter, employees must provide coordinators with a confirmation that they have taken the online health assessment. You will know who has taken the assessment and who has not.
- Q. Will there be a letter from the Governor, sample e-mails or a walking chart to record miles available?**
- A. There will be a letter from the Governor, a *Healthy Virginians* Coordinator Toolkit, Web site links and sample e-mails provided to coordinators. The *Virginia on the Move™* Web site has walking charts to download and print. You may also register and track your steps online every day. Local coordinators may also map out a walking trail and provide distances to certain locations. For example, you might let employees know what is 1 mile or 2,000 steps from the Capitol or a half-mile from the James Monroe Building.
- Q. How will the step counters be distributed?**
- A. The CommonHealth Regional Coordinators have a large supply and will distribute step counters when locations schedule the *Virginia on the Move™* program.
- Q. If an agency is doing another walking program, such as the Turkey Trot, can the same miles be recorded for *Virginia on the Move™*?**
- A. Yes. The *Virginia on the Move™* program is longer and runs until May of next year. There will be other programs and challenges during the course of the campaign and team competition can count toward steps.
- Q. Can agencies use the regular workday to schedule activities?**
- A. We will encourage agency heads to allow the scheduling of activities during the workday and request that they be as flexible as possible during the *Healthy Virginians* initiative. Also, many CommonHealth programs can be provided in 15, 30 or 45-minute versions and adapted to meet individual needs. For example, one agency provided a 15-minute program in the morning and also in the afternoon to accommodate employee work schedules. Contact your CommonHealth Regional Coordinator to determine what programs would work for you.
- Q. If employees work at an agency where access to the Internet is restricted, can the health assessment or tracking of steps for *Virginia on the Move™* be done online during the workday?**
- A. If there are extenuating circumstances at your agency, contact the Department of Human Resource Management for assistance.